The California State University
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Cozby: Methods in Behavioral Research

Chapter 14: Generalizing Research Results

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Learning Objectives

- Discuss the issues created by (trying to) generalize research results to other populations, including potential problems using college students as research participants
  - Discuss issues to consider in generalizing research results to other cultures and ethnic groups
- Discuss the importance of replications
- Distinguish between exact and conceptual replications.
- Distinguish between narrative literature reviews and (quantitative) meta-analyses.

Samples & Populations

College Students: "the" default population for most human research – easy and cheap to obtain (c. 70% for some Journals).

Who volunteers for what?: Selection effects by virtue of selecting particular experiment titles?

- Who volunteers for research on the internet?

Gender: Sample selection based on ease of use of manipulations or misconceptions (alcohol [pregnancy]; contraception)

Locale: Educational & geographic settings may not be comparable

Replications

Exact Replication

Constructive Replication

Conceptual Replication

Generalization

Generalization can considered as an (interaction generating) variable… (when add in additional participant or other variables [e.g., experimenter characteristics])

- To claim the population might impact the results you are claiming that the obtained results may be different at another level of population (i.e., a differently constituted sample)
- E.g., do men and women respond differently to crowding? Is culture likely to impact the findings?

External Validity is the “big” question for generalization

Meta-Analysis

The researcher combines (quantitatively) the actual results of a number of studies.

The “DV” for meta-analyses is typically effect size (cohen’s *d*, *r*, etc.)

Chapter 14 Terminology

- Cohen's d
- Cultural Influences
- External validity
- Factorial Designs
  - Main effects
  - Interactions
  - Simple Effects
- Generalizability
- Literature review
- Meta-analysis
- Quantitative vs. Qualitative
- Replication
  - Conceptual
  - Exact
  - Constructive
- Solomon four-group design

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